

## BUENAS PRÁCTICAS



Please leave rubbish in the bins provided



Walk on the marked paths



Please respect private property



Please avoid making noise



Capturing animals is not permitted



Starting fires is strictly forbidden



Open camping is not permitted



Plant collecting is not allowed

Emergency phone: 112

HUELVA

PARQUE NATURAL  
Sierra de Aracena  
y Picos de Aroche

## MORE INFORMATION

Cabildo Viejo Visitor Centre. Plaza Alta, s/n. Aracena, Huelva.  
(Edificio histórico en la subida a la Iglesia del cerro del Castillo).

Tel. 959 12 95 53/4. [cvcabildoviejo@reservatuvisita.es](mailto:cvcabildoviejo@reservatuvisita.es)

Territorial Delegation of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Sustainable (Huelva).

Calle Sanlúcar de Barrameda, 3, 21001 Huelva. Tel. 959 07 05 54.

[ventanadelvisitante.es](http://ventanadelvisitante.es)



UNIÓN EUROPEA  
Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural



Junta de Andalucía  
Consejería de Agricultura, Ganadería,  
Pesca y Desarrollo Sostenible

PARQUE NATURAL  
Sierra de Aracena  
y Picos de Aroche

trail

Arias Montano

## OTHER CATEGORIES OF PROTECTION



### ROUTE

Circular

### LENGTH

8.7 km

### ESTIMATED TIME

3 hour and 30 minutes

### DIFFICULTY

Medium- High

### TYPE OF TRAIL

Wide lane at the start, changing to sections rocks, paths, dirt tracks and bridle paths.

### LANDSCAPE / VEGETATION

Trail dominated by the luxuriance of the vegetation with a tree canopy characterised by its density and broad leaves. Cork oaks and stone pines dominate the upper sections with frequent chestnuts, gall oaks and Pyrenean oak accompanied by a rich undergrowth.

### SHADE

Frequent

### SPECIAL AUTHORISATION

Not required

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Carry drinking water and sun protection in summer and wear suitable clothing and footwear.

### PROVINCE / MUNICIPALITIES

Huelva / Alajar

### SHEETS OF MTN MAP 1:50.000

917

### START / END COORDINATES

37° 52' 39" N, 6° 40' 10" W

37° 52' 39" N, 6° 40' 10" W



### HOW TO GET THERE

A kilometre from Alájar, on the HV-5214 towards Fuenteheridos, take a left towards Peña de Arias Montano, where you can park and access the trail from the esplanade.



### PARKING

There is parking in the area around the Shrine of Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles, a few metres from the start of the trail.



### PUBLIC TRANSPORT

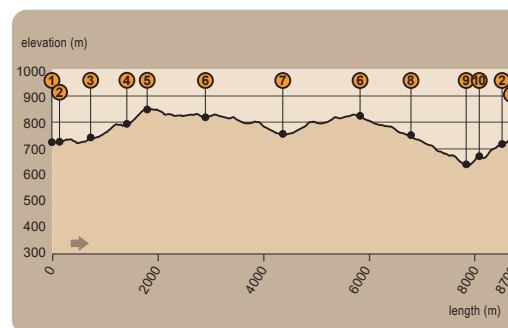
It is not possible to access this trail by public transport. The main companies running regular bus routes in the area are Casal (tel. 954 99 92 90; [www.autocaresbernardo.com](http://www.autocaresbernardo.com)) and Damas (tel. 959 25 69 00; [www.damas-sa.es](http://www.damas-sa.es)).



### OTHER TRAILS

The natural park has an extensive offering of marked trails. The closest are: the Los Madroñeros and Linares de La Sierra-Alájar trails.

### PROFILE OF ROUTE



### MAXIMUM GRADIENT

218 m

### MAXIMUM ALTITUDE

850 m

### MINIMUM ALTITUDE

632 m



## LA PEÑA DE ARIAS MONTANO

Declared a Site of Cultural Interest, the Peña de Arias Montano is an outcrop of limestone rock of great hydrogeological interest. Water and stone are the artifices of this magical place. The entire rock forms a promontory of "tobaceo" a light and porous type of rock that is formed in the immediate surroundings of some springs or upwelling on limestone terrains.

The water that runs across the rock is exclusively rainwater. Its spring is one of the most iconic water sources in the province and has attracted several peoples from Palaeolithic times. For millennia, this water has penetrated the entrails of the rock, originating in the cavities covered in stalactites and stalagmites, dotted with lakes and wells. Moss and lichens have colonised the walls, lending them their characteristic tones. El Palacio Oscuro, La Fuente and El Salón are the names of some of the many caves that are testimony to the underground beauty of the area.

There are up to thirty-seven natural caves in the Peña, many of them linked in the past to the worship of archaic divinities, such as the Sillita del Rey cave, which, according to some studies, was the site of Celtic sacrifices and baptismal rituals going back to before the Muslim presence in the area.

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## The Arias Montano trail

The trail, which starts at the rock where Benito retired from the world of pomp, runs along the path he used to give mass in Castaño del Robledo and return to the rock by the hamlet of El Calabacino. It's an old bridle path than connected that village with Alájar and the hamlet of Calabacino. The path is laden with magic, nature, history, geology, archaeology, symbolism and culture like few others. Just how many times the mystic walked this path, leaving the imprint of his blessed genius we cannot know. Now you have the opportunity to follow in his footsteps and reconnect with this element of our nature and, who knows, perhaps the footsteps of the Maestro Arias Montano that impregnate it will resonate with you.

The start sign [1] is located on the other side of the esplanade facing the shrine of Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles. The first few metres run on a wide section with a firm surface. The trail rises along the western face of the rock and, after passing the turn to the left for the hamlet of Calabacino [2], becomes irregular once again, with the same characteristics of the old bridle paths.



## Nature on the trail

Cork oaks and stone pines dominate this first section, creating an arboreal cupula, elevated and dense, through which the odd ray of light penetrates, and you'll be accompanied by the melodies of the great tit and the oriole or the drumming of the great spotted woodpecker and European green woodpecker. The path winds through a rich undergrowth of strawberry trees, narrow-leaved mock privet, laurestine and heather and the odd hazelnut tree, gall oak and Pyrenean oak. Ivy, brambles and honeysuckle colonise the ancestral walls of stone that border the paths, and the remains of old rural buildings [3]. This place has been inhabited by numerous peoples from the Palaeolithic period, attracted by the richness of the springs, the magnetism of its telluric energy and its strategic, elevated location.

As we ascend on the trails, the clearings in the forest offer views of the valley of the Ribera de Alájar. The lane narrows and widens. The presence of centenary chestnut trees [4], exploited chestnuts, begins to dominate the landscape.



Some 1700 metres from the Start at the mountain pass of Puerto de Galaroza, we reach a fork in the path [5]. We take the path to the left, undoubtedly the one take by Arias Montano to head for village where he was the stand-in parish priest. From there, except for a brief steep slope, we head downhill towards Castaño del Robledo, which gives its name to the area. The hill of Cerro del Castaño, as well as chestnuts, is home to the most extensive Andalusian oak (gall oak) forest in this sierra. At over 950 metres, the natural park reaches its highest peaks here. These heights trap the Atlantic squalls that bring frequent rain, allowing for the development of a Mediterranean forest more typical of shaded and humid areas.

With the hill on one side and the valley of Alájar on the other, we descend through the rows of chestnut trees, with their impossible trunks and their branches like vines rising to the heavens. At the point of inflection where the path takes another steep slope, we find a multiple crossing, where we take the path to the right [6]. On the return at the same crossing, we'll take the path to El Calabacino along the old hamlet path.

## From Castaño del Robledo to the hamlet of El Calabacino

A sweet aroma of humid earth, of fallen fruit and dead chlorophyll leads us to Castaño del Robledo [7]. Once we have visited its streets, squares and churches and sampled its cuisine of chestnuts, wild mushrooms and steaks we retrace our steps. Along a stony, shaded path flanked by stone walls, the holm oaks, cork oaks, strawberry tree, pines, gall oaks, chestnut trees and fig trees accompany us to the crossing [6].



About two kilometres from the crossing, and between the stone walls and magnificent exploited cork oaks [8], we reach El Calabacino [9]. Alongside the drinking water fountain as we exit the village, we take small path up a steep slope. While it is a steep climb and we can't be certain that this was the usual route taken by Arias Montano, the panoramic views of the valley of Alájar [10] are worth the effort. The trail reaches the Rock, closing a loop of its base.

To say that Arias Montano was a wise figure from the 16th century would be like calling John Lennon a 20th century singer. Benito Arias Montano was a biologist, traveller, poet, theologian, publisher, Hebrew scholar, translator, alchemist, astrologist, librarian at the monastery of El Escorial, supervisor of the Antwerp Polyglot Bible, outstanding humanist of the Counter Reformation and adviser and chaplain to King Philip II. He was also an ascetic and chose this corner of the world, in the extreme south of the Sierra Morena, to renounce all his positions and dedicate himself to meditation and the study of the Sacred Scriptures.

Trail

Arias Montano

# Trail

## Arias Montano



- Landmark (see text)
- Georesources
- Trail
- Fountain
- Viewpoint
- Shrine
- Route Arias Montano
- Routes of other trails
- Roads
- Paths



Castaño del Robledo

7

Barrio Castañal

Fuente del Guindal

Cerro La Picoteja

820 m

Cerro de Viñaperdida

840 m

Castaño

960 m

Fuente El Nogal

Puerto de Galaroza

5

La Era

863 m

La Urraleda

827 m

820 m

Parque Natural Sierra de Aracena y Picos de Aroche

Valle Peral

8

El Robledo

873 m

Sierra de la Virgen

Peña de Arias Montano

Manantial de La Peña de Arias Montano

2

Travertino de Alájar

Alájar

El Calabacino

Fuente Alta de El Calabacino

9

Fuente de San Amaro

10

589 m

664 m

La Umbria

708 m

817 m

827 m

831 m

782 m

788 m

921 m

805 m

785 m

816 m

El Aliso

814 m

836 m

879 m

869 m

820 m

836 m

836 m

N

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